Community Assistantship Program

Migrant Worker Housing: Survey Results from South-Central Minnesota

Migrant Worker Housing: Survey Results from South-Central Minnesota

Prepared in partnership with
Centro Campesino

Prepared by
Jaehyn Byun,
Graduate Research Assistant,
& Ann Ziebarth,
Department of Housing, Design and Apparel
University of Minnesota
May, 2002

CAP Report 041

March 2006

CAP is a cross-college, cross-campus University of Minnesota initiative coordinated by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs.

This is a publication of the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA), an all-University applied research and technology center at the University of Minnesota that connects faculty and students with community organizations and public institutions working on significant public policy issues in Minnesota. The content of this report is the responsibility of the author and is not necessarily endorsed by CAP, CURA or the University of Minnesota..

CAP Report 041

Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA)
University of Minnesota
330 HHH Center
301--19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Phone: (612) 625-1551
Fax: (612) 626-0273
E-mail: cura@umn.edu
Web site: http://www.cura.umn.edu

Migrant Worker Housing: Survey Results from South-Central Minnesota*

Ann Ziebarth and Jaehyun Byun

* Prepublication version submitted 25 May 2002 in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Minor in Sustainable Agricultural Systems and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) Community Assistantship (CAP) program for J. Byun. Final version to be published and made available by Centro Campesino, 104 ½ Broadway St. W. #206, Owatonna, MN 55060.

Ann Ziebarth, Ph.D., Department of Design, Housing, and Apparel, University of Minnesota, 240 McNeal Hall, St. Paul, MN 55108; Jaehyun Byun, Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Agronomy and Plant Genetics, University of Minnesota, 411 Borlaug Hall, St. Paul, MN 55108.
§ Corresponding author (e-mail: aziebart@che.umn.edu)

Collaborating Organizations

Centro Campesino, Owatonna, MN
Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA), University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN
Hispanic Advocacy & Community Empowerment through Research (HACER), Minneapolis, MN

Research Team

Ann Ziebarth, Principal Investigator
Kathryn Gilje, Centro Campesino
Jamie Duran, Centro Campesino
Victor Contreras, Centro Campesino
Marina Gonzalez, Centro Campesino
Consuelo Contreras, Centro Campesino
Gloria Constanza Rincón, CURA Intern
Jaehyun Byun, Minor in Sustainable Agricultural Systems/CURA-CAP intern

Project Advisors

Deborah Bushway, HACER
Claudia Fuentes, HACER
Fred Smith, CURA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION **4**
Migrant agricultural workers in the United States 4
Migrant agricultural workers in Minnesota 5
Seasonal agricultural production and processing 5
Migrant worker housing availability and conditions 6

PROJECT OVERVIEW **9**
History and methodology 9
Description of the survey area 10

SURVEY FINDINGS **11**
Characteristics of respondents 11
Employment characteristics 15
Housing shortages 16
Housing types 16
Employer-provided housing 16
Open-market housing 18
Housing quality and affordability 18
Discrimination 23
Home base housing 23

CONCLUSIONS **24**
Recommendations and precautions 24
Resources for rural housing development programs 25
Challenges and models 26
Conclusion 27

Acknowledgments 28
CAP Acknowledgment/Disclaimer 28
References 29

APPENDICES **31**
Appendix 1. Phase One survey, original version in Spanish 31
Appendix 2. Phase One survey, English translation 34
Appendix 3. Phase Two survey, original version in Spanish 37
Appendix 4. Phase Two survey, English translation 40
Appendix 5. Recommendations for improving the surveys 43

INTRODUCTION

Housing for migrant agricultural workers is often scarce, unaffordable, and substandard. Occasional media accounts of migrant workers living in poor housing have brought passing public attention to the situation, but by and large, these workers constitute an invisible population with little political clout. Poverty, language and cultural barriers, the very nature of migration, and a general lack of information on migrant workers are major barriers to efforts to improve their living conditions.

The shortage of affordable housing is among the most pressing problems faced by migrant agricultural workers in rural Minnesota. This report describes the results of a collaborative survey investigating the housing situation of migrant agricultural workers in four counties in south-central Minnesota during the 2001 season.

Migrant agricultural workers in the United States

The problem of estimating housing demand for a transient and marginal population is made still more difficult by the fact that different organizations define migrant agricultural workers differently. Definitions can vary even within the same agency; for example, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) food stamp program considers food processing workers farmworkers, but USDA housing programs do not (Southeastern Minnesota Housing Network 1997). Not all seasonal workers are necessarily migrant workers, and not all migrant workers are employed in the traditional field work setting. In addition, any attempt to quantify housing demand must take into account the number of dependents of migrant workers.

The United States Department of Labor National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS), initiated in 1989, arguably provides the most reliable data on farmworkers nationwide. Based on the Commission on Agricultural Workers 1993 figure of 2,500,000 farmworkers in the US, NAWS estimated that 1,600,000 of these perform seasonal work (Gabbard *et al.* 1994). Of these 1,600,000 seasonal farmworkers, 42%, or 670,000, are migrant farmworkers (Gabbard *et al*. 1994). These 670,000 migrant farmworkers have 410,000 dependents (Gabbard *et al.* 1994). The NAWS defines a migrant as an individual who travels more than 75 miles to work in agriculture. Its definition of a farmworker excludes food processing workers. In the present study, we use the more inclusive term “migrant agricultural worker”, since most of the workers surveyed work less in field environments and more in factory settings, though still within the agricultural sector.

Half of all farmworkers earn less than $7,500 annually, and half of all farmworker families earn less than $10,000 annually (Mehta *et al.* 2000). Migration is driven by low wages and high unemployment in Latin America and the Caribbean, and in the case of the present survey, the Rio Grande Valley of south Texas (Contreras et al, 2001). A large supply of available migrants has led to downward pressure on wages, and in fact, inflation-adjusted farmworker wages declined from $6.89 per hour in 1989 to $6.18 per hour in 1998, in 1998 dollars (Mehta *et al.* 2000). Wages in food processing plants are generally slightly higher, and the opportunity to work longer shifts and receive overtime pay in these plants can increase migrant worker income (Beckstrom 2001).

Migrant agricultural workers in Minnesota

Migrant agricultural workers have been coming to Minnesota since the 1920s (Tomson 1992, Morales 1995, Kielkopf, 2000). Originally, they provided the seasonal workforce necessary to thin sugar beets, pick strawberries, cut asparagus, and perform the hand labor necessary to produce the wide variety of perishable fruits and vegetables grown in the state. Later, as agricultural production practices became more mechanized and specialized, field work shifted to driving trucks, operating machinery in the fields, and processing and packaging seasonal vegetable crops. Many migrant workers in Minnesota now do both field work and factory work, and more and more are employed in nursery settings in an expanding ornamental crop industry.

Estimates of the number of migrant workers in Minnesota vary from 15,000-18,000 according to the Southeastern Minnesota Housing Network (1997) to the Minnesota Department of Health 1997 figure of 25,455 (Forfang and Kramer 1998). Unlike the stereotypical image of migrant workers as gangs of single men following the harvest of seasonal crops along a pattern of multi-state "streams", migrant workers in Minnesota tend to migrate with their families from their home base community in the Rio Grande Valley along the Texas-Mexico border directly to a Minnesota location. The sugar beet-growing region of the Red River Valley straddling the Minnesota-North Dakota border was, and continues to be, a main destination, although advances in sugar beet production such has improved seeds and herbicides have reduced the demand for migrant workers there somewhat (Meyer 1989). The south-central and southeast region of the state, where canneries process sweet corn, green peas, and other vegetables, is the other primary destination of migrant workers. Typically, processing facilities will recruit workers through company representatives or through hired labor contractors (*contratistas*) who travel to southern Texas and northern Mexico each winter to sign up workers (Contreras *et al.* 2001).

Seasonal agricultural production and processing

The demand for migrant agricultural workers is likely to remain stable, as machinery has not replaced hand labor in many horticultural crops. The value of the four principal hand-harvest crops in the US- oranges, grapes, apples, and lettuce- exceeds the value of the wheat crop (Martin 1994). After declining from 1958 to 1970, the number of farmworkers in the US has remained relatively constant since 1970 (Oliveira *et al.* 1993).

Minnesota is a major producer of processed sweet corn and green peas, the main crops in which the migrant workers in the present study worked. In 2000, the most recent year for which figures are available, the statewide farm value of sweet corn for processing was $50.9 million, and that of green peas for processing was $45.2 million (Minnesota Agricultural Statistics Service 2001). In that year, Minnesota ranked second among states nationwide in sweet corn production and first in green pea production (Minnesota Agricultural Statistics Service 2001)

A 1997 report by the Southeastern Minnesota Housing Network found that at least 15 facilities in south-central and southeastern Minnesota hired seasonal workers in 1996. Thirteen of these facilities processed corn, ten processed peas, and nine processed both corn and peas. In addition, individual plants also processed pumpkin, green beans, or lima beans. Plants that employ migrant labor in the region typically hire for a green pea processing season in June and July and a sweet corn processing season that runs from

A truck bringing in the sweet corn harvest. Such trucks are a common sight in south-central and southeastern Minnesota from mid-summer until autumn. (Photo: J. Byun)

July through October. The pumpkin canning season runs from October to early November. (Southeastern Minnesota Housing Network 1997)

Food processing and packaging is a major industry in the survey area. In a study of the Latino workforce in south-central Minnesota, Kielkopf (2000) estimated that 1,668 Latinos were employed in food processing and packaging firms that employ more than 100 workers. The report stated that the estimated value added annually to the local economy due to the presence of the Latino labor force employed in agricultural industries was approximately $24.7 million annually (Kielkopf 2000).

Migrant worker housing availability and conditions

The only attempt to quantify farmworker housing demand nationwide was an unpublished 1980 report prepared for the Farmers Home Administration that estimated an unmet demand of at least 756,195 additional new housing units (Lopez and Legato 1997). As the number of farmworkers in the United States has not declined appreciably since then (Oliveira *et al.* 1993) and the proportion of farmworkers receiving housing from their employers has decreased (Greenhouse 1998), the current demand is almost certainly greater.

Unfortunately, farmworker housing regulations and media exposés of poor housing conditions have, rather than increasing the quality and availability of housing, sometimes created disincentives for growers and companies providing housing (Tomson 1992, Greenhouse 1998). The number of company labor camps in California declined from 5,000 in 1968 to 1,000 in 1998 as growers lacked the resources or will to upgrade

housing to meet federal and state standards (Greenhouse 1998). According to NAWS, 21% of farmworkers receive free housing from their employer, and 7% rented employer-owned housing (Mehta *et al.* 2000). Thus, almost three-fourths of farmworkers nationwide must find housing on the open market, an inherently difficult task due to low and variable farmworker income, stringent occupancy and lease requirements, rural isolation, and all too often, discrimination.

The comprehensive 1997-2000 survey of 4,625 migrant worker housing units by the Housing Assistance Council (HAC) indicated that about 25% of migrant housing units nationwide are employer-owned, about half of which are provided free of charge as part of employment. In spite of the availability of employer-provided housing for some people, housing cost burdens are substantial among migrant worker households. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development guideline for housing affordability is that a family paying more than 30% of its income for housing costs has housing cost burden. According to the HAC survey, one-third of migrant worker households had housing cost burden, excluding units provided free of charge. The median monthly income among migrant workers in the HAC survey was $860, while the median monthly housing cost was $345. Over half of units in the study were overcrowded (more than one person per room) excluding workers living in dormitories and barracks. In comparison, 2% of all housing units in the US were overcrowded. (Housing Assistance Council 2001)

The quality of migrant worker housing is a serious problem. The HAC survey findings showed that serious structural problems are common in farmworker housing. Sagging roofs, frames, and porches were evident in 22% of the units, while 36% had broken windows or screens, 15% had holes in the roof or large sections of missing shingles, and 10% had obvious foundation damage. Interior conditions were also substandard with 29% of the units showing evidence of water damage and 22% with holes in the walls. In 19% of the units, rodent or insect infestation was evident. Furthermore, 22% of the units had at least one fixture or appliance missing or broken, and over 10% lacked a working stove. One of the most serious findings was that 11% of all the units were not only resulting in cost burdens for the households, but were also of substandard quality. (Housing Assistance Council 2001)

Over 10 years ago, a Minnesota Housing Finance Agency and Department of Human Services report (June 1990) highlighted the need for safe, affordable, short term housing for migrant and seasonal farm workers in Minnesota. The report stated that emergency shelter was imperative and had become both a “great cost and a great concern” in some areas of the state. Several newspaper accounts of migrant workers in Minnesota in the last twelve years have documented the rural housing crisis, particularly in the Red River Valley. That region is particularly prone to housing shortages when permanent residents are forced out of their own homes by spring floods into rental housing otherwise occupied by migrant workers (Associated Press 1997). In the town of Crookston, the housing shortage was so severe that migrant farmworkers were housed in an army tent after the local homeless shelter was overwhelmed (Meyer 1989). Increasingly, migrant workers were arriving in the region without their seasonal housing arranged in advance (Tomson 1992). Racial tension and discrimination exacerbated the situation. A Crookston police officer testified that:

> Local people find ways not to house the migrants. They require a six-month lease, double or triple damage deposits, and use an answering

> machine to screen tenants. Don't think there is a fence around Crookston. There isn't. But there is discrimination that's covered up. Sometimes you can just about feel the tension in the air. (Tomson 1992)

A planned migrant housing project to be built with Farmers Home Administration funds in Crookston was a source of conflict as permanent residents resented their "tax money going to pay for migrant services" (Tomson 1992). However, it should be noted that only 17% of farmworkers nationwide use needs-based services such as welfare and food stamps (Mines *et al.* 1997).

The migrant housing crisis is also severe in the vegetable processing areas of south-central and southeastern Minnesota. According to Mary Ullard-Evans, the regional housing network coordinator for Three Rivers Community Action in southeastern Minnesota:

> The last couple years have been really bad. We've hard of a lot more people doubling up two, three, four families living in a two-bedroom trailer… I've heard of people renting out space in their barn. I know the Catholic church in Plainview puts people up in their community room while they try to access housing. (Druley 2001)

The 1997 report by the Southeastern Minnesota Housing Network surveyed migrant labor needs of the vegetable processing facilities in south-central and southeastern Minnesota. These facilities had a combined demand for 2,100 migrant workers, who along with their dependents, would make up 6,300 migrant individuals. The employer-provided units in the region had the capacity to house 1,750 people, of which 862 were in singles-only units. Thus about three-fourths of migrant workers in the region must find housing on the open market, mirroring the national figure. (Southeastern Minnesota Housing Network 1997)

Migrant workers in Minnesota, and across the country, are typically housed in the "least desirable housing that is available within the community"; while the reasons for this are varied, it is "partially a function of income and affordability and partly a function of what is available" (Goodeman 1994). It is estimated that in Minnesota, only 8.3% of migrant worker housing consists of employer-owned units (Housing Assistance Council 2001). Challenges in providing housing for migrant workers extend beyond income. For example, the lack of multi-bedroom rental housing means that large or extended families have great difficulty locating a place to live. Short-term rental housing, short-term leases, month-to-month leases, or flexible leases are often unavailable in areas where migrant labor is most intensive, so that even where vacancies do exist, they are unavailable for seasonal use. Migrants often lack resources to conduct housing searches prior to reaching their work site. In some cases the missing resource can be as simple as access to a telephone. Migrant families are typically unaware of programs that can potentially assist them. And programs that offer assistance to migrants lack standard practices such as similar terminology, delivery methods, evaluation, eligibility requirements, or application processes, making use of the programs difficult even when migrants are aware of their availability.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

History and methodology

Centro Campesino, a migrant worker community organization based in Owatonna, Minnesota, initiated a survey of migrant worker housing in 2001. Founded in 1998, this membership-based nonprofit organization advocates for improved housing and working conditions in south-central Minnesota, as well as for changes in labor and immigration policy at the local, state, and national levels. It also provides services to their membership including interpretation, a migrant-run childcare cooperative, and educational programs in English, citizenship and health. The creation of Centro Campesino was the result of a previous survey conducted by a committee of migrant workers in consultation with the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs at the University of Minnesota (Contreras et al. 2001). Using principles of participatory rural appraisal and activist participatory research, this initial survey resulted in the grassroots efforts of migrant workers to create an organization with an elected board of directors. At the end of the 2000 season, Centro Campesino had successfully negotiated improvements in living conditions and wages for migrant workers at the Chiquita Processed Foods plant in Owatonna.

Building on this success, Centro Campesino developed a migrant worker survey targeted at documenting living conditions of migrant workers in south central Minnesota. Phase One of the survey focused on one small community in south-central Minnesota where a vegetable processing facility employed a large migrant workforce, estimated at nearly 600 workers, during the peak of the season. It was perceived that due to the relatively isolated location, the community lacked services to support the migrant workers and organizing efforts addressing local concerns were limited. The survey questions were open-ended, and, following the original Owatonna survey, covered housing, child care, labor contractor issues, salary, worker safety, and discrimination. The staff of Centro Campesino along with a University of Minnesota intern designed and conducted the survey in consultation with various agencies serving migrant workers and faculty at the University of Minnesota. Data were collected in June and July 2001, with 55 respondents completing survey information.

The lack of affordable housing in the area was widely acknowledged to be the greatest problem facing migrant workers. Centro Campesino was active in various local coalitions working for affordable housing. In 2000, two employer-owned migrant worker camps in the Owatonna area closed. At the end of July 2001, the board of directors of Centro Campesino voted to initiate a worker-owned housing construction project. To support that effort, the survey project was revised to focus specifically on housing needs, and was expanded to communities in a four-county area where vegetable processing plants employed migrant labor. Phase Two of the survey was completed from July through September 2001 and included survey information from 227 migrant workers. The total response of 282 migrant workers completing surveys was quite high in spite of the opinion of many respondents that they have been “surveyed to death” and felt frustrated by the lack of improvement in their conditions.

Both surveys were conducted in Spanish by teams of interviewers from Centro Campesino and the University of Minnesota. The original surveys in Spanish along with English translations are reproduced in Appendices 1-4. Migrant workers were interviewed in public places such as parks and street corners, at company-owned

housing, door-to door among private housing units and in hotels, at community events such as Migrant Education fairs and Centro Campesino gatherings, at the Centro Campesino office when workers came in for meetings and classes, at offices of social services for migrant workers, after Spanish-language church services, at Mexican grocery stores, and in one case, in a facility lunchroom during breaks and shift changes. Interviewers explained to each respondent that the results were to be presented to the migrant community so that the workers would "own" the information and decide themselves what future action ought to be taken. All personal identifying information was deleted from the data prior to analysis in order to protect the respondents' anonymity.

Description of the survey area

The survey was conducted in a four-county region in south-central Minnesota. Each of the four counties (Le Sueur, Rice, Steele, and Waseca) had a town with a vegetable processing plant employing migrant workers during the green pea and sweet corn processing seasons. Some of the plants processed other food products as well. County and community population data are given in Table 1.

In 2000, of the 756,560 tons of sweet corn for processing harvested on 129,400 acres in Minnesota, 8,600 tons were harvested on 1,500 acres in Le Sueur County, 24,900 tons were harvested on 4,300 acres in Steele County, and 31,400 tons were harvested on 5,500 acres in Waseca County. Rice County had too little production to be listed separately but was included in the survey due to the processing facility located there. (Minnesota Agricultural Statistics Service 2001)

In the same year, 140,240 tons of green peas for processing were harvested on 86,400 acres statewide. This included 1,800 tons on 1,300 acres in Le Sueur County, 4,500 tons on 3,200 acres in Steele County, and 3,200 tons on 2,300 acres in Waseca County. Again, Rice County was not listed separately. (Minnesota Agricultural Statistics Service 2001)

Table 1. County and town population, and canneries in the survey area.

County	**County population (2000)**	**Town with vegetable processing plant**	**Town population (2000)**
Le Sueur	25,426	Montgomery	2,794
Rice	56,665	Faribault	20,818
Steele	33,680	Owatonna	22,434
Waseca	19,526	Waseca	8,493

Source: United States Census Bureau, *United States Census 2000* (http://www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html)

SURVEY FINDINGS

Characteristics of respondents

Fifty-five people were surveyed in Phase One of the survey, and 227 were surveyed in Phase Two. More females than males (56% vs. 44%) were surveyed in Phase One, while more males than females (57% vs. 43%) were surveyed Phase Two. Overall, 55% of the respondents were male and 45% female (Table 2), a more even gender distribution than in the general US farmworker population, which is 80% male (Mehta *et al.* 2000).

The greatest share of the respondents (61%) spent the season in Le Sueur County, especially in Montgomery (58%), the focus of Centro Campesino's expansion efforts (Table 3). Steele, Waseca, and Rice Counties were the seasonal homes of 25%, 23%, and 16% of the respondents, respectively. An additional 4% lived in outlying counties.

Among the respondents, 83% listed Texas as their permanent residence, and 7% listed Mexico (Table 4). Another 7% considered Minnesota as their permanent home; these still considered themselves migrants but had stayed the previous season in Minnesota. The largest concentration of respondents was in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (Figure 2), especially in Hidalgo County (35%). Within Hidalgo County, Mission (12%) and Sullivan City (11%) had the most respondents in the survey. Cameron County, also in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and including the city of Brownsville, was home to another 16% of the respondents. Further upriver, the city of Eagle Pass in Maverick County was home to 17% of the respondents.

Table 2. Gender of survey respondents.

Male	148
Female	122
No response	12
Total	**282**

Table 3. Survey respondents by county.

County	**Number of respondents**
Le Sueur	121
Rice	32
Steele	50
Waseca	43
Other*	7
No response	29
Total	**282**

*Dodge County, 3; Goodhue County, 2; Freeborn County, 1; and Scott County, 1.

Table 4. Permanent residence of survey respondents.

Country	State	County	Respondents
El Salvador			**1**
Mexico			**14**
United States			**198**
	Minnesota*		**15**
		Rice	2
		Steele	5
		Waseca	8
	South Carolina		**1**
	Texas		**177**
		Angelina	1
		Bexar	2
		Cameron (Brownsville area)	35
		Henderson	1
		Hidalgo (McAllen-Mission-Sullivan City area)	75
		Maverick (Eagle Pass area)	37
		McLennan	2
		Polk	1
		Starr	6
		Val Verde (Del Rio area)	9
		Zavala	3
		undetermined	5
	Washington		**5**
No response			**69**
TOTAL			**228**

* These respondents had recently settled or had stayed in Minnesota the previous winter ("transitional migrants"), but still identified themselves as migrant workers.

Most of the respondents arrived in June (28%), July (26%), or May (13%), and planned to leave in September (48%) or October (28%) (Figures 1-2). The mean projected length of stay in Minnesota for the 198 respondents who gave specific months of arrival and departure in 2001 was 3.6 months.

Figure 1. Month of arrival of respondents in the 2001 season.

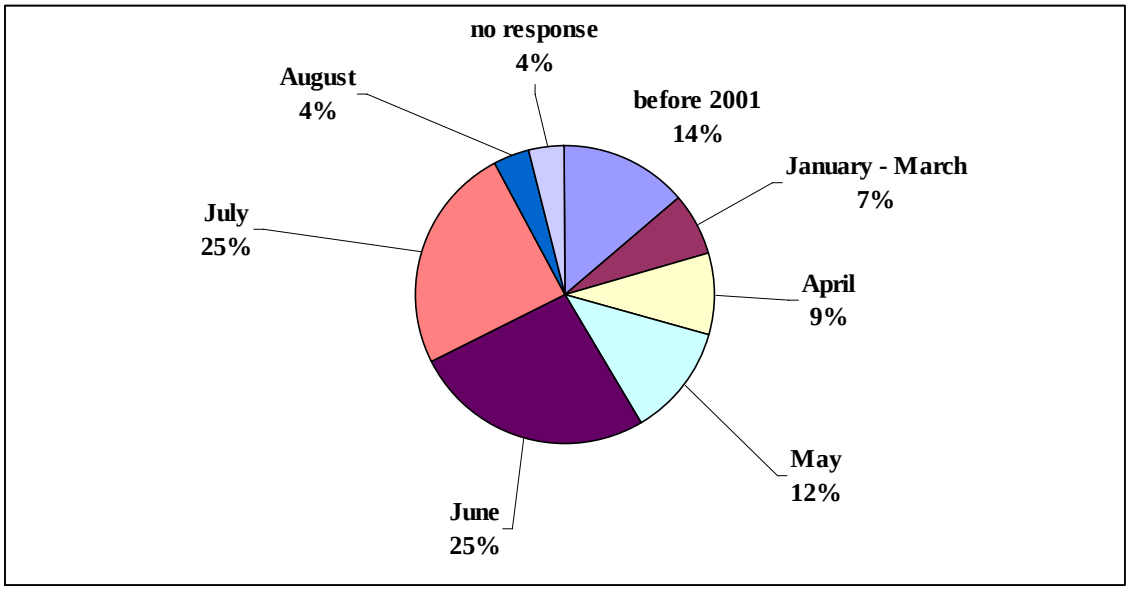
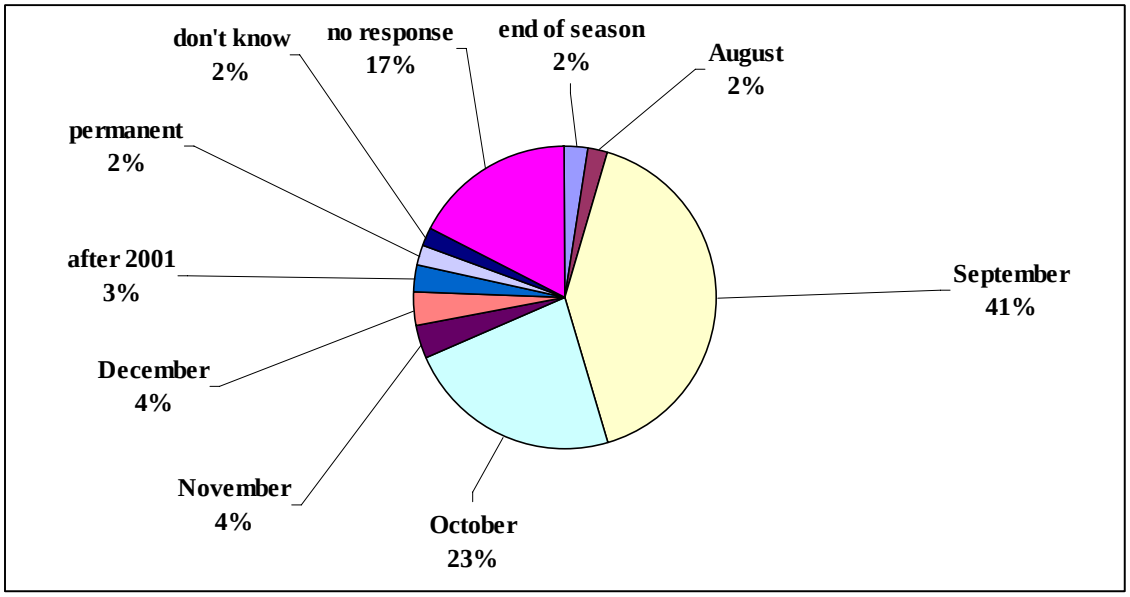
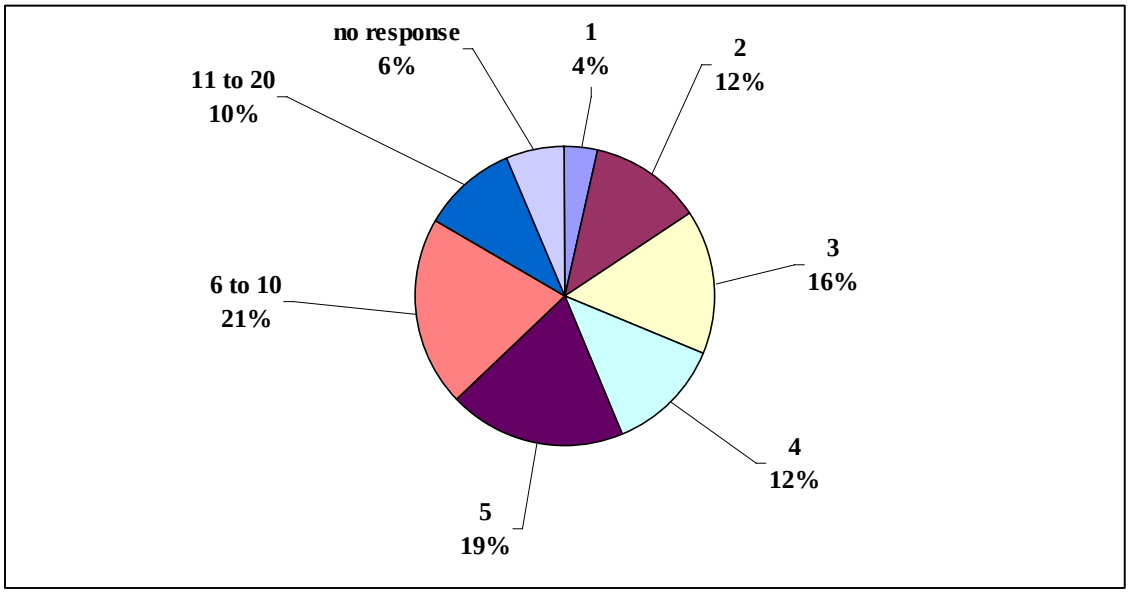


Figure 2. Month of departure of respondents in the 2001 season.



The mean household size was 6.8, but this statistic included many people living in employer-owned barracks trailers that housed up to 15 people each. When these residents were excluded, the mean household size was 5.2. Nearly one-third of the respondents not living employer-owned barracks trailers lived in households consisting of more than five people (Figure 3). Forty-three percent of the respondents had at least one child. Among

Figure 3. Household size of respondents not living in employer-provided barracks.



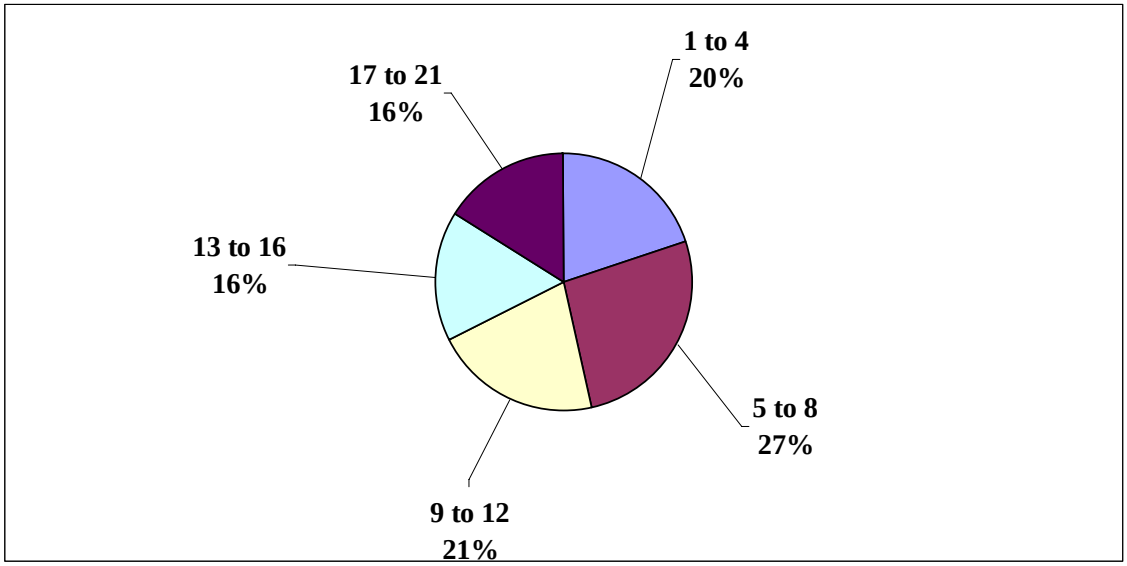
the 115 households with children, the number of children ranged from 1 to 7, with an average of 2.3 children.

Almost all (96%) of the respondents expected to return the following season. Ninety-one percent of respondents were interested in joining a committee or organization to advocate on behalf of migrant workers.

The Phase One survey included some questions not asked in the Phase Two survey. The mean age of the respondents was 37.6, which is older than the nationwide farmworker average of 31 (Mehta *et al*. 2000). The 54 respondents in the Phase One survey had a total of 81 children accompanying the workers, and the mean age of the children was 10 years (Figure 4). Sixty-five percent of the respondents did not consider their housing "comfortable and adequate to live in", and 81% did not consider their salary adequate. Fifty-two percent of respondents did not have housing arranged before arriving for the current season.

Thirty-two percent of respondents were unsure of whether they would be compensated in case of a workplace accident, and 38% did not believe that they would be; only 24% knew that they would. Fifteen percent had experienced a workplace accident. Sixty percent did not have health insurance, and 13% did not know whether or not they did.

Figure 4. Age of 81 children in households from the Phase One survey.



Employment characteristics

Unlike the conventional view of migrants as field workers following a harvest, survey respondents were, in fact, seasonal workers in an industrial setting who often pieced together income from multiple sources. Some picked rock from local farmers' fields in the spring, and some filled in the gap between the pea and corn packs with corn detasseling or weeding, but their primary employment was often in the processing plants. Over three-fourths of respondents listed a vegetable processing plant as their primary employer (Table 5). Some listed non-agricultural facilities as secondary employers.

In order to find housing, migrant workers often had to drive some distance to work. The overall average commute to work was 6.0 miles; excluding those who lived in employer-provided housing next to the processing plant, the mean commute was 8.2 miles. With no public transportation available in the area, workers provided their own vehicles.

Table 5. Types of work done by respondents during the 2001 season.

CATEGORY	Percentage of respondents
Vegetable processing	77%
Picking rock from fields	16%
Detasseling corn	13%
Weeding	13%
Nursery work	10%
Vegetable harvesting	8%

The income of the migrant workers surveyed was extremely low. The mean hourly wage of respondents was $7.21, and one-third of respondents made between $6.00 and $6.49 per hour. Three-fourths of the respondents made less than $7.50 an hour, and only 6% made more than $10.00 per hour. In addition, earnings were dependent upon the number of hours worked, which varied considerably over time as the harvest was subject to changes in weather. According to one worker: "The only good thing about the salary is the overtime. What helps us more are the hours rather than the salary. This year there is not a lot of work".

Housing shortages

Finding housing was a struggle for most of the migrant workers. Many respondents in Montgomery cited as a pressing problem the lack of housing for families. Many would have liked their employer to provide family housing. In addition, the employer-provided barracks trailers were available only during the sweet corn pack and not during the green pea pack despite the fact that many workers were employed for both seasons.

"I looked for a place and there is no place anywhere."

"I spent thirteen days living in my car, cooking in the parks while looking for a place."

"There aren't enough houses to rent."

"I lived for 25 days in a hotel with friends and finally found a place after asking around. One year I had to return to Texas because I couldn't find housing."

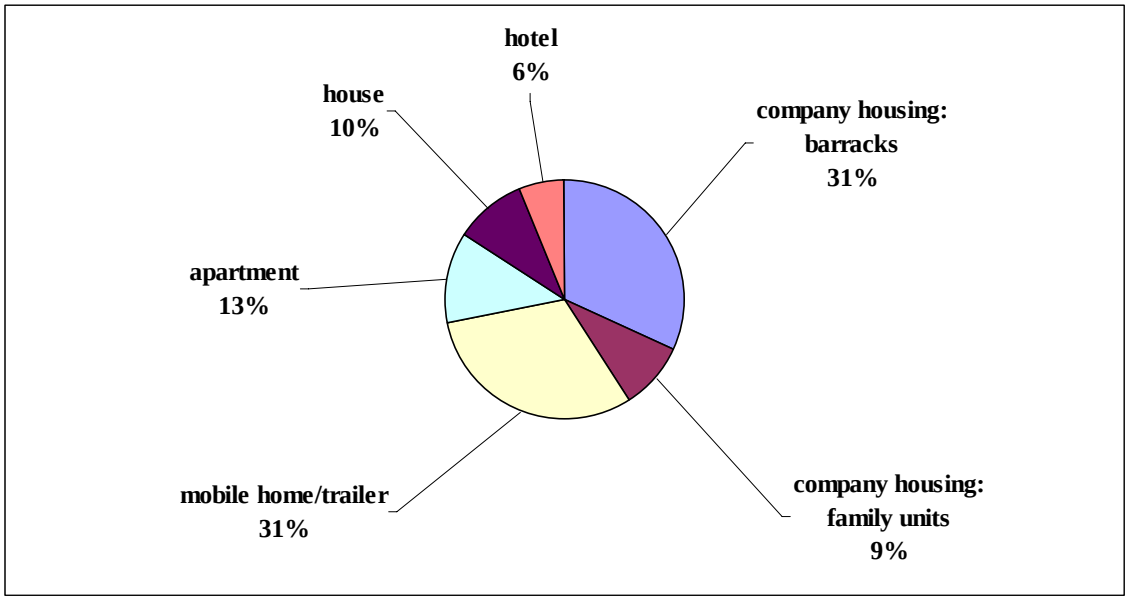
Housing types

Of the 184 respondents who indicated housing type, 40% lived in employer-provided housing and 60% lived in open-market housing (Figure 5). Those living in employer-provided housing were primarily in gender-segregated barracks accommodations in temporary trailers. Others lived in family housing units. About one-third (31%) lived in mobile homes, 12.5% rented apartments, 8% lived in housing and the remaining 6% lived in residential hotels in single rooms with a shared bathroom down the hall.

Employer-provided housing

In one community, the employer-provided housing was located nine miles from the community in which the processing plant was located. The housing consisted of one-story cinder block buildings with one family assigned to each unit. The units had a sink with hot and cold water faucets and a single-burner gas unit for cooking. Heating was provided by a small space heater. The camp had central shared bathrooms and a laundry room for the residents. Nine percent of all respondents lived here.

Figure 5. Housing type of 184 respondents (excludes those who did not indicate housing type). The barracks and family units are employer-provided housing. The other housing types are open-market housing.



Employer-provided barracks. Each trailer houses up to 15 single workers. The trailers are separated by gender, but some married couples cannot find open market housing and live separated in the trailers for the season. (Photo: J. Byun)

Some migrant workers spend the season in hotels for lack of better available housing. (Photo: J. Byun)

In another community, the employer-provided housing was for single people only and separated people by gender. The housing consisted of barracks trailer units housing up to 15 people each. These were located on company property adjacent to the processing facility. There was no access to kitchen facilities at these trailers, and the bathrooms were in a central building. Nearly one-third of the respondents lived in these trailer barracks.

Open-market housing

Among the respondents who lived in open-market housing, 92% had running water within their unit, and 8% did not. Eighty-six percent had a private bathroom in their unit, and 14% did not. Eighty-nine percent had a kitchen in their unit, while 11% did not. The mean number of bedrooms in open-market units was 2.1, and the mean number of people per room was 2.5.

Housing quality and affordability

Comments on housing quality were overwhelmingly negative (Table 6). Common complaints concerned the lack of private bathrooms (especially in hotels and in company housing), the lack of kitchens and running water (in hotels and some employer-provided housing units), the lack of private bathrooms in employer-provided housing, crowding, discrimination, housing condition, the difficulty of finding landlords willing to rent to families, and expense.

Some migrant families rent trailers for the season. (Photo: J. Byun)

Table 6. Respondents' comments about housing by category.

Category	**Percentage of respondents**
Negative	87%
Lack of private bathroom, or bathroom inadequate	26%
Lack of kitchen	18%
Too crowded / too small	13%
Lack of water, or water dirty	11%
Discrimination in looking for housing	115
Repairs needed	7%
Housing inappropriate or unavailable for families	6%
Too expensive	6%
Lack of privacy	6%
Heating or ventilation inadequate	4%
Married couples split up due to separation by gender	2%
Too noisy	2%
Lack of Social Security Number	1%
Credit record unavailable or not trusted	1%

Employer-provided housing in singles-only barracks trailers cost workers $90 per month. While this was affordable, conditions were minimally acceptable. The lack of access to even a common kitchen was the most common complaint of those living in this housing type. Due to the housing shortage in the area, some married couples ended up living in these trailers, living separately for the season.

"It is crowded. There are no bathrooms inside the trailers. We go outside and walk 300 feet to go to the bathroom."

"We have to cook outside… I would like a kitchen inside, with a refrigerator."

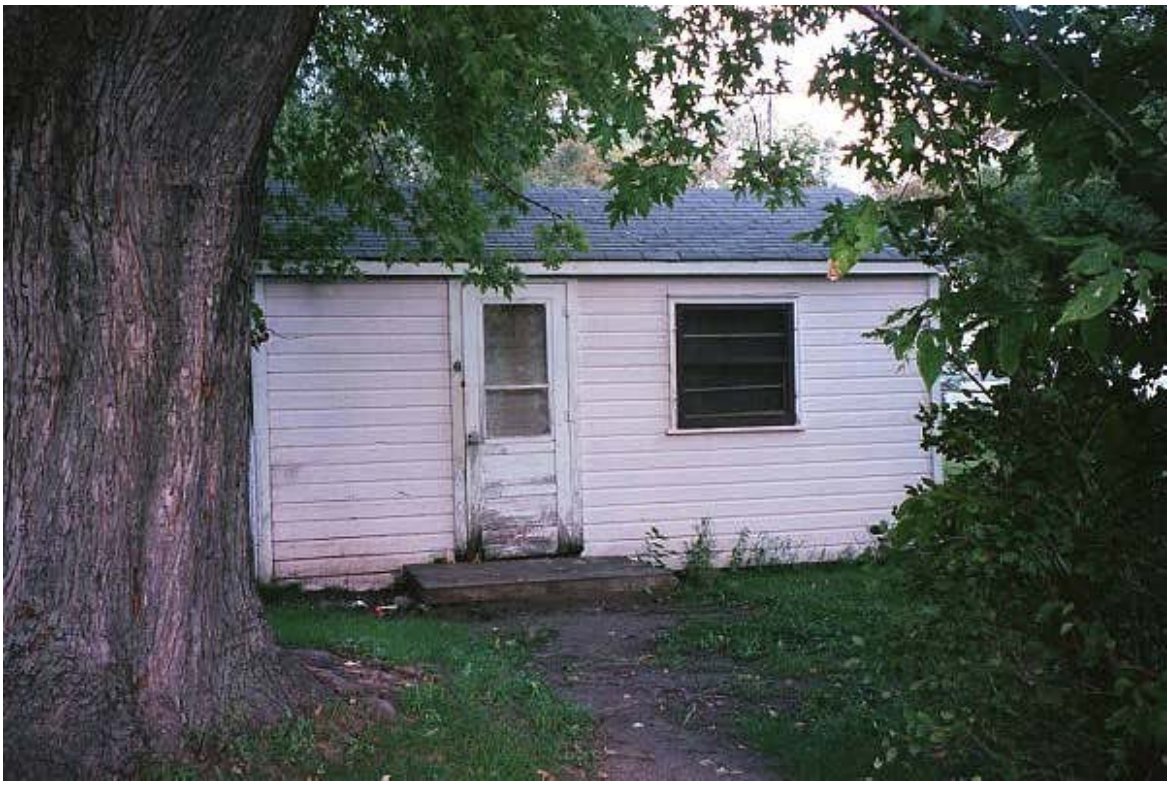
"It is noisy. It is hard to rest and sleep."

"Children are not allowed in the units."

"We are nine women living together. There is no place to keep our belongings. There is no bathroom inside, and no drinking water. We have to cook outside, in the park".

Central bathroom for company-provided family units. (Photo: J. Byun)

The migrant family living in this house had to vacate in the middle of the corn pack because of an insect infestation. (Photo: J. Byun)



Sharing housing found on the open market is one solution that workers have found. Many people struggling to find housing end up doubled up with other families, often in overcrowded situations.

"I live with my sister-in-law, but I would like to have my own place with my family."

"There are too many people living in just two rooms."

"A person lent us two rooms in a trailer, but we are looking for a better place to live."

"There are seven units with more than 30 people sharing one bathroom. You get water at a public faucet. Sometimes there is no hot water."

Condition of the housing units is often unacceptable. For some, the housing is not only costly and crowded, but of poor quality as well.

"The roof needs to be fixed."

"There is neither hot water nor heat."

"The bathroom is too small and dirty, with bugs."

"The water smells bad, like mold and urine."

"There is no stove, and the power keeps going out."

The mean rent paid by the respondents living in open-market housing was $397 per month. Thirty-four percent of these respondents paid a deposit in addition to their rent. Among the 83 people who paid a deposit, the mean deposit was $353. When utility costs were included, the mean housing cost paid by these people was $455 per month per household, or $116 per month per capita. Utilities were included in the rent for 35% of these respondents; the other 65% paid utilities separately.

Those who lived in company owned "family" housing paid $40 per worker per month in rent. Those living in the company-owned barracks trailers paid $90 per occupant per month. In both types of company housing, utilities were included in the rent and no deposit was required.

Houses were the most expensive housing type (Table 7), and had a mean housing cost (rent plus utilities) of $625 monthly. Hotels were next, with a mean housing cost of $580 monthly. None of the people living in hotels reported having hot water, private bathrooms, or kitchens within their units. Apartments had a mean housing cost of $429 monthly. Trailers and mobile homes were the most affordable option, at $270 per month.

Table 7. Mean housing cost (rent plus utilities) by housing type.

Housing type	**Number of respondents**	**Average monthly housing cost**
Market housing		
House	18	$625 per unit
Hotel	11	$580 per unit
Apartment	23	$429 per unit
Trailers and mobile homes	57	$270 per unit
Company housing		
Barracks	59	$90 per occupant
Family units	16	$40 per worker

Discrimination

Forty-three percent of the Phase One survey respondents had experienced some form of racial discrimination in Minnesota. When asked what they would like to change about their situation in Minnesota, half cited their housing situation, desiring greater availability of rental units (especially for families) and better housing quality.

For seasonal workers who rent housing in the open market, there are often difficulties with leasing requirements and discrimination. Among all respondents, 21% reported experiencing discrimination when looking for housing.

"We can't find a place. People don't rent to us because we have six children."

"I was told I could not rent because I don't have a Social Security Number."

"There are apartments, but the deposits are $1,000 to $1,500."

"Once we went to submit an application to rent a place and the person didn't let us go in and closed the door saying bad words."

"People don't rent to Hispanics… when I applied to rent, I was told I was not accepted because I am Hispanic."

"The door was closed on me without even asking a question."

Home base housing

Sixty-nine percent of respondents were owners of their permanent housing, and the other 31% were renters. Home base housing tended to be more secure and of higher quality than the seasonal living quarters of the migrant workers. The mean number of years spent in this permanent housing was 7.5. Almost all of the permanent housing had running water (98%), private bathrooms (96%), and kitchens (99%) (Table 8). However, the household size of the home base housing units was larger than in seasonal housing. In the home base community the mean household size was 9.7 people. With an average of 2.7 bedrooms per home, the mean number of people per bedroom was 3.6.

Table 8. Seasonal and permanent housing characteristics of respondents.

Characteristic	Seasonal housing		Permanent housing
	Employer-provided housing	Open-market housing	
Running water in unit	0%	92%	98%
Private bathroom in unit	0%	86%	96%
Kitchen in unit	23%	89%	99%
Household size	13.8 (barracks) 3.8 (family units)	5.2	9.7
Mean number of bedrooms	divided trailer (barracks) 1.0 (family units)	2.1	2.7
Mean number of people per bedroom	13.8 (barracks) 3.8 (family units)	2.5	3.6

CONCLUSIONS

Recommendations and precautions

The findings from this survey and a review of previous reports and newspaper accounts indicate that there remains a considerable need for affordable seasonal housing for agricultural workers in south-central Minnesota. While changes in agricultural practices have decreased the demand for field labor, the need for seasonal migrant labor has not been eliminated. The seasonal labor demand for workers in the food processing sector remains high. The local population does not meet the demand for this type of work, and reliance on migrant workers remains high. At the same time, both employer-provided and open-market housing available for these workers is increasingly scarce.

Traditionally, the provision of seasonal worker housing was the responsibility of growers. Over time, however, this pattern has changed. Enforcements of health and safety standards for farmworker housing have resulted in fewer units being available as growers are averse to liability, or lack resources to bring existing housing into compliance with standards. Crops are increasingly grown under contract, and field labor is hired through formal rather than informal arrangements. Vertical integration has resulted in the processor handling the payroll for growers, making it difficult to distinguish between fieldwork and factory processing work. Since funding for farmworker housing is restricted by policy to those whose primary source of income is agricultural field work, the increasing reliance on processing factory wages further diminishes the access to seasonal housing for migrant agricultural workers and their families.

Furthermore there is concern that the creation of migrant housing by the nonprofit sector constitutes an inappropriate subsidy to the growers, owners, and employers, continuing the cycle of exploitation of migrant labor and limiting year-round occupancy options for migrant laborers who want to settle permanently in the area (Morales 1995). Those workers living in company-owned housing provided by either the grower or the

processor are restricted in their ability to seek better employment or to protest work conditions. Losing one's job means losing one's housing.

One alternative to employer-owned housing and the shortage of affordable appropriate market rate housing is for workers to develop, own, and manage their own housing. The potential for worker-owned housing is great. The housing can be designed in direct consultation with migrant workers to meet their individual and family needs with larger homes, duplexes, or apartments. Without the need to generate extensive profit in the investment, workers can develop more cost-effective high quality housing and keep it affordable over time. Furthermore, a variety of ownership strategies can be employed. For example, the units can be owned by a non-profit organization and rented seasonally to migrant workers, or can be owned by a cooperative with members holding shares that entitled them to occupancy in a specific unit. Or they could be owner-occupied single family, twin homes, or condominiums.

Resources for rural housing development programs

A number of governmental programs are available to assist in the development of housing that would be suitable for migrant agricultural workers. A brief description of selected funding sources follows. Eligibility for these funding programs should be extended to reflect the increasing industrialization of the migrant labor force.

Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants. USDA Rural Housing Services (Sections 514/516) provides funding to build, buy, improve or repair housing for farm laborers. Funds can be used to purchase a site or leasehold interest in a site, to construct the housing, to construct day care facilities and community rooms, to pay fees, to purchase durable household furnishings, and to pay construction loan interest. Farmworker associations are eligible for grants; farmers, associations of farmers, and family farm corporations are eligible for low-interest loans.

Rural Rental and Cooperative Housing Loans. USDA Rural Housing Services (Section 515) provides direct loans to finance rental or cooperatively owned housing designed for very low-, low-, and moderate-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Funds may be used to construct new housing or to purchase and rehabilitate existing structures for rental purposes. Funds may also be used to buy and improve land and provide necessary facilities such as water and waste water disposal systems. Priority for funding is given to those living in substandard housing. When rental assistance is used, top priority is provided for very low-income households.

It should be noted that funding for Farm Labor Housing and Rural Rental and Cooperative Housing programs falls far short of the demand. For example, in 1997 the federal funding level for the Farm Labor Housing Loans and Grants (Section 514/516) program was $25 million, while at the same time a survey conducted by the Housing Assistance Council indicated that there were over $134.5 million in applications being prepared for submission in 1998 (Housing Assistance Council 2001). In fiscal year 2001, Congress combined the programs giving the USDA discretion over the proportion of loans and grants to be made from the fund, which received $47 million in appropriations.

Homeownership programs are another alternative for farmworker housing. In situations where migrant workers seek to settle permanently in one location, mutual self-help housing has resulted in affordable housing options. Groups of families work together to build housing using their own labor ("sweat equity") to lower to construction costs. The use of Section 523 self-help technical assistance grants has increased the

capacity for groups to promote homeownership among farmworkers. USDA Rural Housing Services 502 direct loans with subsidized interest rates have helped lower mortgage costs for very low-income families. Funds to assist those who already own homes to make necessary repairs are also available to local housing organizations through the Rural Housing Services Section 533 Housing Preservation grants.

The *US Department of Housing and Urban Development* (HUD), in addition to the USDA Rural Housing Services, can contribute to improving housing conditions for migrant agriculture workers. HUD provides funding for local housing authorities and others to provide affordable housing. Programs that support housing development include the HOME program and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Most of the funding available for farmworker housing in rural locations would be administered by the state and local jurisdiction. In Minnesota, the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency allocates federal block funds for housing programs to local counties and communities. The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency has state funding programs that provide limited monies to keep housing construction affordable for low-to-moderate income households. Most of these funds are available as loans, but there are also matching grants funds available through the housing trust fund.

The *Greater Minnesota Housing Fund* (GMHF) is another source of gap financing for affordable housing outside the metropolitan area. The priority of GMHF is to fund housing for year-round workers in communities where new or expanded employment has resulted in a lack of affordable housing.

Challenges and models

The fact that housing designated for migrant agricultural workers is vacant in the off-season creates a number of challenges. First, vacancy has a negative impact on project cash flows because not only are there no tenants paying rent, but also because project owners cannot collect potential rent assistance from governmental sources such as Rural Housing Services rental assistance or HUD Section 8 voucher programs (Housing Assistance Council 2001).

A second challenge is the difficulty of maintaining buildings that are vacant during the off-season. In some cases, seasonal housing has been utilized as year round housing by providing short-term transitional housing for homeless families or by renting the units to tenants seeking short-term rental opportunities, such as college students.

A major challenge to improving the housing situation for migrant agricultural workers is simply the very low income of the workers. Households with annual incomes well below the poverty level have difficulty making any housing situation affordable and still provide sufficient capital to continue the housing operation.

The following three examples illustrate how successful housing for seasonal agricultural workers has been provided in Minnesota.

Brooten Farm Labor Housing Project. 40 units. Brooten, Minnesota

Funding was established by the Rural Economic and Community Development Services (formerly the Farmers Home Administration). Occupants are qualified by "working in farm labor from which they derive their primary income". This does not include processing plant and cannery work. This migrant and farm labor housing has been in existence for over 10 years. There are 40 units that have 3 bedrooms each, available for six months to each family. Occupancy is usually from April to November.

The buildings are closed the rest of the year. The cost of the project was approximately $1.22 million. (Morales 1995).

Crookston Farm Labor Housing. 10 units. Tri-Valley Opportunity Council, Inc.

Ten duplexes, two five-bedroom, two four-bedroom, two three-bedroom, and eight two-bedroom units, ranging in size from 832-1,326 square feet. Occupants must be migrant families with proof of employment. Priority for occupancy is given to migrant workers from May 1st through September (or October) 1st. To provide income to the development in the off-season, units are rented to college students and families with transitional housing needs. (United Migrant Opportunity Services, personal communication)

Claremont Center, Dodge County. 18 units. United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS).

Acquisition and rehabilitation of a former migrant camp with funding provided by USDA in fiscal year 2000. Allowed for already permitted use zoning. UMOS, a nonprofit migrant worker assistance agency, is the owner, operator and manager. It is seeking a bilingual/bicultural site manager to handle day-to-day operations. The USDA was concerned with that isolated location failed to integrate the migrant population into the broader community and limited migrants' access to transportation and services. (United Migrant Opportunity Services, personal communication)

Conclusion

From the findings in this study, it is obvious that neither the employer-provided housing nor the open housing market have sufficiently provided safe, decent, affordable housing for migrant agricultural workers in south-central Minnesota. Housing conditions of these workers is substantially lower in quality than typical housing available in rural Minnesota or the home base housing migrants have in the Rio Grande Valley. As a result, it is recommended that migrant workers organize and actively pursue the improvement of existing housing and the development of more appropriate housing, especially for families.

Centro Campesino and others should work to improve the existing housing available by supporting local housing quality enforcement efforts. They should encourage growers and processors who provide housing to make basic quality improvements to the housing they own, such as advocating that barracks-style housing include common rooms, cooking facilities and bathrooms in the same buildings as the sleeping quarters. Renovation to older housing units to meet basic health and safety standards is essential.

Finally, the development of worker-owned housing alternatives should be considered. Collective user-oriented processes should be employed in the planning, design, development, and management of these units. We recommend that the organization explore the potential of cooperative housing arrangements for Centro Campesino members.

Acknowledgments

The authors thank the staff of Centro Campesino: Victor Contreras, Jaime Duran, Kathryn Gilje, Marina Gonzalez, Consuelo Contreras, and Gloria Contreras. Special thanks are also due Bob Kell of Catholic Charities in Montgomery; Cecilio Palacios, proprietor of La Tienda Azteca in Montgomery; and Michelle Noel of Faribault Foods. United Migrant Opportunity Service (UMOS) in Mankato assisted with survey design. J. Byun and C. Rincón would like to thank the Community Assistantship Program (CAP), a project of both the Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research (HACER) and the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) at the University of Minnesota, for funding and travel expenses.

CAP Acknowledgment/Disclaimer

The Community Assistantship Program (CAP) supported the work of the authors of this report but has not reviewed it for publication. The Content is solely the responsibility of the authors and is not necessarily endorsed by CAP.

CAP is a cross-college, cross-campus University of Minnesota initiative coordinated by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. CAP is supported by grants from the McKnight Foundation, the Otto-Bremer Foundation, the Initiative Fund of Southeast and South Central Minnesota, the Initiative Foundation, the Northwest Minnesota Foundation, and the Southwest Minnesota Foundation. CAP receives support from the following units at the University of Minnesota: the Office of the Vice President and Provost, the Rural Development Council, the Experiment in Rural Cooperation, the NE Minnesota Sustainable Development Partnership, the Central Region Sustainable Development Partnership, the Southwest Sustainable Development Partnership, the College of Human Ecology, the University of Minnesota Extension Service, the College of Natural Resources, the College of Education and Human Development, the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, the Center for Small Towns, the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences, the College of Liberal Arts, the Carlson School of Management and the College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture.

Community Assistantship Program
330 Hubert H. Humphrey Center
301 – 19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455
phone: 612-251-7304
e-mail: joann001@umn.edu

References

Associated Press. 14 June 1997. Migrants frustrated by housing crunch. *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, 2B.

Beckstrom, M. 5 August 2001. Migrants' work: a tough row to hoe. *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, 1B.

Contreras, Victor, Jaime Duran, and Kathryn Gilje. 2001. Migrant farmworkers in south-central Minnesota: farmworker-led research and action for change. *CURA Reporter* 3(1): 1-8. Minneapolis, MN: Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota.

Druley, Laura. August 14, 2001. No place for migrants. Minnesota Public Radio. <http://news.mpr.org/features/200108/14_druleyl_housing-m/index.shtml>

Forfang, Jan C., and Lesli Kramer. July 1998. *Minnesota Department of Health 1997 Migrant Farm Workers Survey*. St. Paul, MN: Division of Disease Prevention and Control, Minnesota Department of Health.

Gabbard, Susan, Rick Mines, and Beatriz Boccalandro. May 1994. Migrant farmworkers: pursuing security in an unstable labor market. *National Agricultural Workers Survey Research Report* 5. Washington, DC: Office of Program Economics, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, United States Department of Labor.

Goodeman, Rick. January 1994. *Minority Housing Issues in Southwestern Minnesota*. Report prepared for the Subcommittee on Manufactured Housing.

Greenhouse, Steven. 31 May 1998. As economy booms, migrant workers' housing worsens. *The New York Times*, A1.

Housing Assistance Council. September 2001. *No Refuge from the Fields: Findings from a Survey of Farmworker Housing in the United States*. Washington, DC. <http://www.ruralhome.org/pubs/farmworker/norefuge/norefuge.pdf>

Kielkopf, James. J. September 2000. *Estimating the Economic Impact of the Latino Workforce in South Central Minnesota*. Mankato, MN: Center for Rural Policy and Development, Minnesota State University.

Lopez, Norma C., and Nancy Legato. August 1997. *Housing for Families and Unaccompanied Migrant Farmworkers*. Washington, DC: Housing Assistance Council. <www.ruralhome.org/pubs/farmworker/migrant/index.htm>

Martin, Phillip. November 1994. Migrant farmworkers and their children. *ERIC Digest* EDO-RC-94-7). Charlestown, WV: Appalachia Educational Laboratory, November 1994.

Mehta, Kala, Susan M. Gabbard, Vanessa Barrat, Melissa Lewis, Daniel Carroll, and Richard Mines. April 2000. Findings from the National Agricultural Workers Survey

(NAWS) 1997-1998: a demographic and employment profile of United States farmworkers. *National Agricultural Workers Survey Research Report* 8. Washington, DC: Office of Program Economics, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, United States Department of Labor. <http://www.dol.gov/asp/programs/agworker/report_8.pdf>

Meyer, Jeff. 2 June 1989. Crookston sees lack of migrant housing. *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, 7B.

Mines, Richard, Susan Gabbard, and Anne Steirman. April 1997. A profile of U.S. farmworkers: demographics, household composition, income and use of services. *National Agricultural Workers Survey Research Report* 6. Washington, DC: Office of Program Economics, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, United States Department of Labor. <http://www.dol.gov/asp/programs/agworker/report/main.htm>

Minnesota Agricultural Statistics Service. 2001. *Minnesota Agricultural Statistics 2000*. St. Paul, MN: United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service, Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

Minnesota Housing Finance Agency and Minnesota Department of Human Services. June 1990. *Report of the Migrant Farmworker Housing Task Force.*

Morales, Lupe Castillo. 1995. Internship report prepared for the Minnesota Housing Partnership.

Oliveira, Victor J., Anne B.W. Effland, Jack L. Runyan, and Shannon Hamm. 1993. Hired farm labor use on fruit, vegetable, and horticultural specialty farms. *Agricultural Economic Report* 676. Washington, DC: Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

Southeastern Minnesota Housing Network. February 1997. *A Report of Findings on Seasonal Farm and Food Processing Worker Housing for South Central and Southeastern Minnesota*. Zumbrota, MN.

Tomson, Ellen. 7 June 1992. Migrants hunt for work, shelter in sugar beet country. *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, 1A.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Phase One survey, original version in Spanish.

TRABAJADORES MIGRANTES EN MONTGOMERY
CENSO DEL VERANO DE 2001
Centro de Asuntos Urbanos y Regionales de la Universidad de Minnesota;
Centro Campesino

****

Entrevistador(a): _____

Apuntador(a): _____

Fecha: _____ Hora: _____ Sitio: _____

****

Nombre: _____

Dirección: _____

_____

Teléfono: _____

Edad: _____ años

****

1. ¿De dónde viene usted?

   Ciudad: _____

   Estado o pais: _____

2. ¿Cuándo vino usted? _____

   ¿Cuándo terminará usted aquí? _____

3. ¿Con quién vino usted? (esposo o esposa, niños, otros parientes, amigos, etc.)?

   _____

   Si vino con niños:

   ¿cuántos son? _____

   ¿de que edades? _____

   ¿cómo se cuidan mientras está trabajando usted? _____

4. ¿En cual tipo de vivienda está usted ahora (casa, apartamento, trailer de Seneca, otro trailer, hotel, etc).? _____

_____

5. ¿Cuando vino usted a Minnesota, ya tuvo vivienda arreglada? _____

Si contesta 'no':

¿Cómo consiguió usted su vivienda? _____

6. ¿Con quién vive usted? _____

_____

7. ¿Cuánto paga usted por la renta? _____

¿Por cuánto tiempo es el contrato? _____

¿A cuántas millas está la vivienda del trabajo? _____

8 ¿Piensa usted que la vivienda es cómoda y adecuada para pasar la temporada?

¿Que problemas tiene usted con la vivienda? _____

_____

9. ¿Qué tipos o clases de trabajo hace usted? _____

_____

10 ¿Cuántas horas trabaja usted por día? _____

¿Cuántos días por semana? _____

11 ¿Vino usted con contratista? _____

¿Cree usted que es mejor venir con contratista o sin contratista? _____

¿Porqué? _____

12 ¿Cuánto le paga a usted? _____

¿Cree usted que éste es buen salario y adecuado para vivir? _____

13 ¿Cuales son los peligros de su trabajo? _____

_____

¿Cuál es el peligro que lo mas preocupa a usted? _____

_____

14 ¿Ha tenido usted un accidente en su trabajo en Minnesota? _____

Si contesta 'sí':

¿Qué pasó? _____

_____

15 ¿Le paga a usted en caso de un accidente en el trabajo? _____

16 ¿Tiene usted seguro de salud? _____

_____

17. ¿Cree usted que la economía de Minnesota se beneficia con el trabajo de los migrantes? _____

18. ¿Ha experimentado usted la discriminación a causa de su raza en Minnesota?

_____

Si contesta 'sí':

¿Qué pasó? _____

_____

19. ¿Qué le gustaría a usted cambiar de su situación en Minnesota? _____

_____

20. ¿A usted le interesaría estar en un comité para apoyar a la gente migrante? _____

21. ¿Tiene usted otros comentarios u opiniones? _____

_____

Appendix 2. Phase One survey, English translation.

MIGRANT WORKERS IN MONTGOMERY
SUMMER 2001 SURVEY
Center for Urban and Regional Affairs at the University of Minnesota; Centro Campesino

****

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____

****

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Telephone: _____

Age: _____ years

****

1. Where do you come from?

   City: _____

   State or country: _____

2. When did you come? _____

   When will you be done here? _____

3. With whom did you come? (husband or wife, children, other relatives, friends, etc.)? _____

   If came with children:

   how many? _____

   how old are they? _____

   how are they cared for while you work? _____

   _____

4. In what type of housing are you in now (house, apartment, Seneca trailer, other trailer, hotel, etc.)? _____

5. When you came to Minnesota, did you already have housing arranged? _____

If answers 'no': How did you obtain your housing? _____

_____

6. With whom do you live? _____

_____

7. How much do you pay for rent? _____

For how long is the lease? _____

How many miles is your housing from where you work? _____

8 Do you think that your housing is comfortable and adequate for the season?

What problems do you have with housing? _____

_____

9. What types or classes of work do you do? _____

_____

10 How many hours do you work per day? _____

How many days per week? _____

11 Did you come with a contractor? _____

Do you believe that it is better to come with or without a contractor? _____

Why? _____

12 How much are you paid? _____

Do you think that this is a good salary and adequate to live on? _____

13 What are the hazards of your work? _____

_____

What is the hazard that most worries you? _____

_____

14 Have you had an accident at work in Minnesota? _____

If answers 'yes':

What happened? _____

_____

15 Are you paid in case of an accident at work? _____

16 Do you have health insurance? _____

_____

17. Do you believe that Minnesota's economy benefits from the work of migrants?

_____

18. Have you experienced racial discrimination in Minnesota? _____

If answers 'yes':

What happened? _____

_____

19. What would you like to change of your situation in Minnesota? _____

_____

20. Would you be interested in being on a committee to support migrants? _____

21. Do you have other comments or opinions? _____

_____

Appendix 3. Phase Two survey, original version in Spanish.

CENSO PARA VIVIENDAS DE TRABAJADORES MIGRANTES

Entrevistador/a : _____ Fecha: _____ Hora: _____

****

Nombre: _____

Direccion en Minnesota: _____

_____

Teléfono: _____

Direccion de su hogar permanente: _____

_____

Teléfono: _____

****

1. ¿En que mes llegó usted al estado de Minnesota? _____
2. ¿En que mes piensa regresar? _____
3. ¿Cuantas personas viven con usted?

   _____ Hombres Adultos _____ Mujeres Adultas

   _____ Niños _____ Niñas
4. ¿Cuanto paga usted por renta? ____Diario _____ Por Semana ____ Por Mes
5. ¿Usted pagó un deposito? □ Si □ No

   Si contesta si, ¿cuanto pagó? _____
6. ¿Las utilidades estan incluidas en su renta? □ Si □ No

   Si contesta no, ¿cuanto paga por el electricidad? _____

   ¿calefaccion/aire? _____ ¿agua? _____
7. ¿Tiene agua a dentro de su unidad en su vivienda? □ Si □ No

8. ¿Hay baño en su unidad? □ Si □ No

9. ¿Tiene agua caliente en su unidad? □ Si □ No

10. ¿Hay cocina en su unidad? □ Si □ No

11. ¿Cuantos cuartos/recameras tiene (no incluyendo cocina y baño)? _____

12. ¿Cuanto tiempo tiene usted viviendo en esta vivienda? _____

13. ¿Para cuanto tiempo piensa durar aqui en este lugar? _____

14. ¿Ha tenido usted alguna experiencia de discriminacion buscando vivienda? □ Si □ No

    Si contesta si, por favor de un ejemplo:

    _____

    _____

15. ¿Que tipo de trabajo ha hecho usted mientras esta viviendo aqui?

    _____ piedra _____ yierba _____ processando verdura

    _____ espiga _____ nurseria _____ levantando verdura

    _____ otro: _____

16. ¿Cuales son los nombres de las companías o rancheros donde usted ha trabajado esta temporada? _____ , _____,

    _____,

17. ¿Cuanto es lo que le pagan de salario a usted ahorita? _____

18. ¿Que tan lejos esta su trabajo de donde usted vive? _____ millas _____ horas

19. ¿Le gustaria obtener servicios como estos?

    □ Servicios de Salud para Migrantes

    □ Servicios de Abogado para Migrantes

□ Escuela para Niños Migrantes

□ Cuidado de Niños

□ Algo mas _____

20. ¿Usted piensa regresar el año que entra? □ Si □ No

Si contesta si, ¿Cuantas personas piensan venir con usted? _____

Testimonios de su vivienda donde vive ahora:

_____

_____

21. ¿Usted renta o es dueño cuando usted regresa a su estado o pais? _____ Renta _____Dueño

22. ¿Que es el pago de la vivienda allí? _____

¿Las utilidades van incluidas en la renta? __si __no

Si dice que no, ¿Que paga usted para el electricidad? _____ ¿Agua?_____

23. ¿Usted tiene agua a dentro de su vivienda? □ Si □ No

24. ¿Usted tiene baño a dentro de su vivienda? □ Si □ No

¿Tiene cocina? □ Si □ No

25. ¿Cuantos recameras tiene su casa (no incluyendo baño y cocina)? _____

26. ¿Cuanto tiempo tiene usted viviendo en esta casa? _____

27. ¿ Cuantas personas viven allí? _____Hombres _____Mujeres

_____Niños _____Niñas

Gracias por su tiempo.

¿A usted le interesaría estar en un comite para apoyar a la gente migrante? □ Si □ No

Si contesta si, ¿Como lo/la podríamos contactar a usted en el futuro? _____

Appendix 4. Phase Two survey, English translation.

MIGRANT WORKER HOUSING SURVEY

Interviewer : _____ Date: _____ Time: _____

****

Name: _____

Minnesota address: _____

_____ Telephone: _____

Permanent address: _____

_____ Telephone: _____

****

1. In what month did you arrive in the state of Minnesota? _____
2. What month do you think you will return to your country or state? _____
3. How many people live with you?

   _____ Adult Men _____ Adult Women

   _____ Boys _____ Girls
4. How much do you pay for rent? _____

   By day, by week, by month? _____
5. Did you pay a security deposit? □ Yes □ No

   If answer is yes, how much? _____
6. Are utilities included in the rent? □ Yes □ No

   If answer is no, how much do you pay for electricity? _____

   heat/air? _____

   water? _____
7. Do you have water available inside your unit? □ Yes □ No
8. Do you have a bathroom inside your unit? □ Yes □ No

9. Do you have hot water inside your unit? □ Yes □ No

10. Is there a kitchen in your unit? □ Yes □ No

11. How many rooms are there in the unit (not including bathroom and kitchen)?

_____

12. How long have you been living in this unit? _____

13. How long do you plan to stay in this place? _____

14. Have you experienced discrimination while looking for housing?

□ Yes □ No

If answer is yes, please describe:

_____

15. What type of work have you done while living here?

_____ picking rock _____ detasseling corn

_____ weeding _____ nursery

_____ vegetable processing _____ other: _____

16. What are the names of the companies or farmers where you have worked this season? _____ , _____, _____,

17. What is your salary right now? _____

18. How far is your work from where you live? _____ miles _____ hours

19. Would you like to access services like these?

□ Migrant Health Service

□ Legal Services

□ School for Migrant Children

□ Child care

□ Other _____

20. Do you plan to return next year? □ Yes □ No

If yes, how many people plan to come with you? _____

Comments about your current housing:

_____

21. Do you rent or are you a homeowner when you return to your home state or country? _____ Renter _____Owner

22. What is the cost of the housing there? _____

Are the utilities included in the rent? __yes __no

If answer is no, what do you pay for the electricity? _____ water?_____

23. Do you have water available inside your housing? □ Yes □ No

24. Do you have a bathroom inside your housing? □ Yes □ No

Do you have a kitchen? □ Yes □ No

25. How many bedrooms does your housing have (not including kitchen or bathroom)? _____

26. For how long have you lived in this housing? _____

27. How many people live there? _____Adult men _____Adult women _____Boys _____Girls

Thank you for your time.

Would you be interested in being part of a committee to support migrants? □ Yes □ No

If answer is yes, how can we contact you in the future? _____

Appendix 5. Recommendations for improving the surveys.

Demographics

The Phase Two survey should have asked the respondent's age. Both phases should have had an explicit question about gender; many of the "no response" answers were from people who did not give their names.

For people who did not give their addresses, an explicit question asking the Minnesota town in which they lived would have been helpful.

Household composition was not equal to family composition (Phase 2, question 3). A question about whether the respondent was living with family or sharing housing with another family should have been included for both Minnesota and permanent housing in Phase Two (see Phase One, question 6). Similarly, the number of children the respondent was living with was not the same as the number of children in his or her family (Phase Two, question 3). And in Phase One, who the respondent came with was not the same as who the respondent lived with (question 3).

Some families were double-counted in the survey when more than one member of a family was surveyed. A decision to survey people individually or as households must be made clear before beginning such a survey. The failure to make this clear before beginning surveying led to confusion when people who did not work answered questions about work on behalf of their spouses who did, or when couples filled out one survey between them.

Employment characteristics

In order to determine whether housing costs paid by the respondents were "affordable" using the 30% of income criterion, a question about annual income should have been included. The hourly wage was a misleading indicator of income due to the seasonal nature of the work, fluctuations in work hours during the season, heavy dependence on overtime pay during harvest peaks, and the absence of any questions about paid work at the respondents' permanent homes. For this reason, question 10 in Phase One about hours worked per day and days worked per week gave unreliable results.

Phase Two should have included a question about the respondent's degree of satisfaction with their salary (see Phase One, question 12).

Many respondents listed companies and jobs at which they had worked in past years. It should have been made clearer to the surveyors that they were to have asked about companies and jobs worked in the current season only.

The questions about types of work performed in Phase Two (question 15) should have been written in yes/no format, as it was impossible to distinguish between "no" and "no response" for these questions. The same is true for the question about services desired (question 19). The services question should have also asked about housing and rental assistance.

A question about migrant work performed in other states would have revealed whether the respondents were going back and forth between Texas and Minnesota only, or were "following the harvest" in other states. Questions about the motivations for migrating would have revealed more about economic conditions in the home base region.

Housing characteristics

Phase Two should have included an explicit question about type of housing, which was often difficult to deduce from the given information (see Phase One, question 4).

The perceived distance of housing from work is somewhat unreliable (Phase One, question 7; Phase Two, question 18). A more accurate measure of commute distance could have been obtained by explicitly asking what town the housing and workplace were in.

The questions about permanent housing in Phase Two were confusing. It was not clear whether a respondent "owned" a home if someone else in his or her family was the actual owner (question 21). The question about the "pay" of the permanent housing (question 22) elicited responses as varied as monthly rent, down payment, home value, and mortgage payments. Some of the respondents from Mexico gave numbers in pesos rather than dollars.

Phase Two should have included a question about the respondent's perception of their housing situation (see Phase One, question 8).

Other questions from Phase One

Many respondents were not familiar with the contractor system (question 11). Some answered that they had come through a contractor when they had been directly contracted by the company. The question should have asked whether the respondent came through an independent, non-company contractor. In general, this question was not applicable to the overwhelming majority of those surveyed.

The questions about workplace hazards (question 13) should have been collapsed into one question.

The question about whether the respondent believed that Minnesota's economy benefited from their labor (question 17) caused much confusion and was not needed.